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SPEIDEL: "I PLEAD GUILTY"

General Hans Speidel, former nazi general, and today West German general and Commander of NATO Land Forces, Central Europe, has publicly admitted his participation in the following crimes:

1. Working as a nazi spy in Paris before World War II.
2. Complicity in the deportation and murder of hundreds of French hostages during the nazi occupation of France.
3. Carrying out the fascist "scorched earth" policy in the Soviet Union.
4. Complicity in the murder of Field Marshal Rommel by the nazis because of Rommel's belated resistance to Hitler.

In what way has General Speidel admitted the truth of these charges? The story goes like this:

In 1958 DEFA, the film company of the German Democratic Republic, produced a documentary film "Operation Teutonic Sword" exposing the past record of General Speidel.

In recent months this film has been widely shown in Britain and other countries. At the end of February 1959, General Speidel instructed his lawyers to commence libel proceedings against Plato Films, of London, who had distributed the film.

But the significant factor was that Speidel only objected to one passage in the film, a passage dealing with the assassination of King Alexander of Yugoslavia in 1934.

He did not raise any objection to the rest of the film; and the rest of the film had given details of his participation in the crimes named above!

General Speidel's libel case is still pending, and it would therefore be improper for us to comment upon that part of the film to which he has raised objections. On these pages, therefore, we confine ourselves to a summary of the facts given in the parts of the film which General Speidel has implicitly stated to be correct.

1. Speidel was a Nazi spy in pre-war Paris

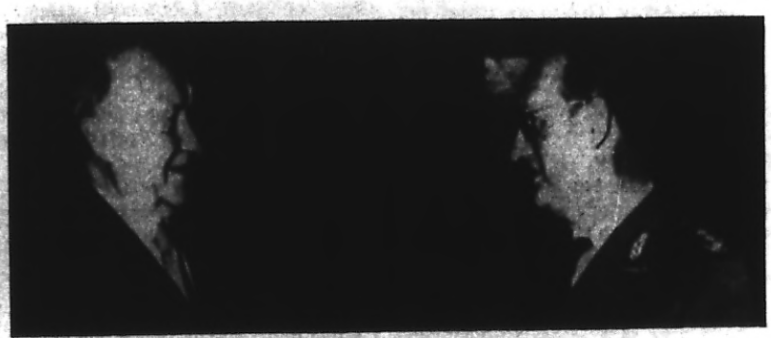
The film exposing Speidel reproduced a sworn statement made by General Bamler, one-time German counter-intelligence expert, who joined the Free German Committee in the Soviet Union during the war. General Bamler declared on oath:

"From 1934 to 1938 I was chief of the Counter-Espionage Section of the Wehrmacht High Command ... We had nearly every day a 'column', that is to say the chiefs of the various departments of the secret service came together to ... settle basic problems of our work.

"At one such column — as far as I can remember at the end of 1934 or the beginning of 1935 — the representative of the espionage department, Major Grimmeiss, asked Admiral Canaris for permission to use Captain Speidel in the active espionage service. Canaris asked: 'Why particularly Speidel?' and received roughly this reply: 'We have naturally been working with him on the quiet, and he has been so extremely successful that we should now like to have your official permission, Admiral.'

"Canaris thought for a moment, and then said something like this: '... If you attach such value to Speidel, then keep him in your apparatus for all I care'."

If this charge is untrue, why has General Speidel not included it in his libel case?



West German Chancellor Adenauer and Nazi General Speidel

2. Speidel was accomplice in the deportation and murder of hundreds of French hostages during the nazi occupation of France.

The film exposing Speidel reproduced a document signed by Speidel

on February 28th 1942, when he was Chief of General Staff to the Nazi Military Commander in Occupied Paris. On page 4 of this document, Speidel reported:

"The following retaliatory measures were ordered in the period under review:

"On February 3rd 1942 six Communists and Jews were shot in retaliation for various ambushes and bomb attacks in Paris.

"In retaliation for an attack on a member of the Wehrmacht in Elboeuf (District A) on February 14th 1942, ten Communists and Jews were shot on February 21st.

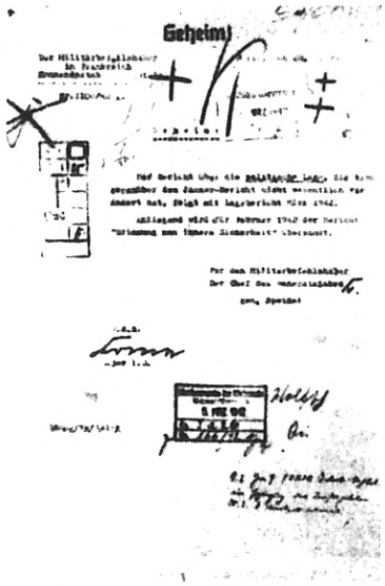
"In retaliation for an attack on a member of the Wehrmacht in Rouen (District A) on February 4th 1942, twenty-five Communists and Jews were shot on February 21st.

"In retaliation for an attack on a member of the Wehrmacht in Tours (District B) on February 5th 1942, fifteen Communists and Jews were shot on February 21st."

And so it goes on, for page after page. The report continues:

"In connection with the measures outlined in paragraphs b) to d) above, orders were given for the transfer to German detention of 1000 Communists and Jews ... These have been made ready for deportation to the East."

If this charge is untrue, why has General Speidel not included it in his libel case?



Speidel's notorious letter dated February 28th 1942. The letter is signed "For the Military Commander, Speidel, Chief of General Staff", and states "... attached please find report on public opinion and internal security for February 1942". Details of this Speidel report are reproduced in the column above.

General Speidel of NATO inspects future British officers

3. Speidel carried out the nazi "scorched earth" policy in the Soviet Union, in breach of the laws and usages of war!

The film exposing Speidel states: "We have very precise information about his activities on Russian territory. In February 1950 the West German militarist magazine 'Wehrkunde' reported: 'Speidel had an active share in decisions as Chief of General Staff of the Fifth Army Corps, later the Eighth Army. He experienced heavy defensive fighting in Viasma, the Caucasus, the Don and the Kuban ...' Here are pictures from the sectors which Speidel's army marched through. A whole film is not enough to tell how much death and destruction Speidel brought to the Soviet Union ... He made all speed to burn the houses, to destroy the villages, and to demolish the cities and the factories."

If this charge is untrue, why has General Speidel not included it in his libel case?

Speidel (right) on occupied Soviet territory

4. Speidel played a direct part in the murder of Field Marshal Rommel by the nazis.

The film exposing Speidel states: "In Spring 1944 ... Field Marshal Rommel knew that the war was lost, and he attempted to leave the sinking ship in good time.

"Rommel got in touch with a group of conspirators who wanted to get rid of Hitler ... In April 1944, General Speidel was assigned to Rommel's Army Group as Chief of Staff, and Rommel told Speidel what he was thinking."

(The film then gives details of the bomb-plot of July 20th 1944, and how Rommel was ordered to Berlin but took poison on the way.)

"On September 8th 1945 the newspaper 'Suedkurier', published in Konstanz in West Germany, printed a sworn statement by Marshal Rommel's son Manfred Rommel. The statement said: 'My father did not die a natural death ... On October 14th 1944 I had a short home leave. My father was in good health ... He told me that he had just said goodbye to my mother, and that Adolf Hitler had given him the choice of taking poison or being arraigned before the People's Court. My father chose to die by his own hand. During our conversation, my father told me that he was suspected of participation in the plot of July 20th. His former Chief of Staff, Lieutenant General Speidel ... had stated that my father had played a leading part in the conspiracy'."

If this charge is untrue, why has General Speidel not included it in his libel case?

NOTE TO BRITISH READERS

Plato Films Ltd., of 18 Greek Street, London W. 1 (telephone GERRARD 4753/4) are the British distributors of a film which tells of the life and crimes of General Speidel.

PROGRAMME FOR GENEVA

Democratic Germany's Four Points

The Government of the German Democratic Republic has, a four-point programme for the negotiations of the Foreign Ministers in Geneva, scheduled to open on May 11th.

This programme was outlined by Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl in a government declaration in the People's Chamber of Democratic Germany on April 16th. Here are the main points of the programme:

1. Main task of the Foreign Ministers' Conference must be the preparation of a peace treaty with Germany.

2. The Foreign Ministers should take steps to clarify the West Berlin situation, on the basis of the proposals made for the conversion of West Berlin into a demilitarised Free City.

3. Steps must be taken towards the establishment of an atom-free zone in central Europe, the thinning out of military strength, etc.

4. The question of German reunification is a subject for the two German states and the German people, and not a subject for the Foreign Ministers' Conference.

After Prime Minister Grotewohl's speech, the People's Chamber unanimously approved the suggestion made by the Prime Minister that the West German parliament should be invited to name delegates to meet with delegates from the People's Chamber to discuss preparations for the Geneva Conference, and joint steps to promote peace.

In the course of his important speech, Prime Minister Grotewohl made the following points:

Peace Treaty: "The conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany is the most urgent task, since this would prevent the atomic armament of West Germany. The best thing would be if the two German states established a confederation, and the peace treaty could then be signed with this confederation. Since the present West German Government is not ready to take steps to establish a confederation, it will be necessary to sign the peace treaty separately with the two existing German states.

West Berlin. The only aim of the proposals made for the solution of the West Berlin problem is to get rid of the dangerous centre of tension in West Berlin. "That is why we call for West Berlin to be converted into a demilitarised Free City. We have no intention of interfering in any way in the existing social order in West Berlin. We have already declared that we shall respect the status of West Berlin as a demilitarised free city, and guarantee its communications with the outside world. Proposals have been made that the whole of Berlin should be placed under some sort of international control. We have no intention of allowing any outside control of the capital of the German Democratic Republic."

Thinned-Out Zone. The Government of the German Democratic Republic has always supported serious plans for zones of limited arms in Central Europe, such as the 1955 Eden Plan, the Rapacki Plan, etc. The main aim of such plans, however, must be to impose limitations upon the resurrected aggressive policies of West German militarism.

German Reunification. German reunification is a matter for the two German states, and no intervention by other states can be permitted, except in the form of friendly proposals. The only feasible way towards reunification under the present circumstances is the creation of a confederation of the two states. This proposal is founded on the fact that the two German states have different social systems, and that West Germany is a partner to aggressive military pacts: a mechanical integration of the two states is quite impossible under these circumstances.

GENEVA DELEGATES NAMED

Here are thumb-nail sketches of the veteran anti-fascists who will head the delegation from the German Democratic Republic at the Geneva Conference beginning on May 11th:

Dr Lothar Bolz, Foreign Minister und Deputy Prime Minister. Born in 1903, and practiced as a lawyer until stricken from the rolls by the nazis in 1933. Forced to emigrate to Poland and the Soviet Union. When he returned to Germany after the war he became Chairman of the National Democratic Party, Minister for Reconstruction in 1949, Foreign Minister in 1953.

Otto Winzer, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs. Born in 1902, compositor by trade. Member of Communist Party since 1925, forced to emigrate by nazis. Leading government positions since formation of German Democratic Republic in 1949.

Dr Heinrich Toeplitz, State Secretary in Ministry of Justice. Born 1914, lawyer by profession. Persecuted by nazis because of Jewish ancestry, two years in forced labour camp. Leading member of Christian Democratic Union.

Peter Florin, Chairman of Foreign Affairs Committee of People's Chamber. Born 1921, journalist by profession. Forced by nazis to emigrate with father, Communist leader Wilhelm Florin. Fought with Red Army against nazis.

PROTESTANT BISHOP GREETS MOVE

On April 8th Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl of the German Democratic Republic formally proposed to West German Chancellor Adenauer that representatives of the two German states should meet before the Geneva Conference to work out a joint standpoint on the subjects to be discussed there. Adenauer ignored the letter.

On April 13th Bishop Mitzenheim, head of the Evangelical Church in Thuringia, German Democratic Republic, wrote to Prime Minister Grotewohl supporting his initiative. The bishop's letter stated in part:

"I have to thank you for the renewed initiative which you have taken in the question of a peace treaty and reunification . . . I should not like to evaluate political steps, but your letter goes beyond political actions, and expresses the feelings of many citizens in both parts of Germany, Christians and non-Christians alike. . . . What we need today is a new ethic in relations between men and relations between states, and I regard your letter as an expression of this new ethic."

"War Threat Not Good Enough"

Walter Lippmann Backs New West Berlin Status

The influential American commentator Walter Lippmann backed the establishment of a Free City of West Berlin in the "New York Herald Tribune" on April 8th. Mr Lippmann's proposals showed very close parallels to the proposals for ending the West Berlin problem made in recent months by the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic. Here are the most important passages from his article:

"In my view, the future of West Berlin cannot be secured adequately by a determination to stand firm on a policy of standing pat. No doubt, we can prevent the Soviet Union and the East German Government from blockading West Berlin. We can threaten to go to war if they do. But that is not good enough ...

"The West Berliners cannot go on for years waiting to hear what the Pentagon will say about going to war whenever an East Berlin official harasses them. There has already been some considerable flight of capital since the Khrushchov note of last November, and the economy of West Berlin will wither if, whenever there is a sign of trouble, the best we can do for it is to threaten World War III.

"My conviction is that the future of West Berlin must be protected not by standing pat but on our insisting that West Berlin needs and is entitled to have a new status. When Mr K. tells us that the present status of Berlin is obsolete, it is a mistake for the West to act as if any departure from the status quo would be a defeat and a surrender. It might be an improvement.

"At present the status quo is, from our point of view, extremely unsatisfactory. The right answer to Mr K. is to propose that we negotiate a new charter or statute in which West Berlin is guaranteed an ordered future by the presence of Western troops acting under international auspices.

"A new statute for Berlin is needed because the existing arrangements were improvised, rather incompetently, by men who regarded them as temporary. Nobody planned them for a long future. Nobody supposed that there would be two German states with Berlin in the middle of one of them ...

"For us negotiation must start from these two fundamentals: the need for a long future of steadfastness and stability, and the need for a change which reflects the new realities. This can best be done if a new statute is negotiated in which the future of Berlin is put in trust with the United Nations ...

"Then, in the new statute, the right of access, the conditions of coexistence, the relations between the two Berlins and the two Germanys, the presence of Allied and United Nations token military forces, should be spelled out. (Mr Lippmann then pointed to the example of the Vatican City, which is entirely surrounded by Italian territory).

"Both sides have much to gain from such a settlement. For us it would mean that the West Berlin community was guaranteed physical security under a new and much more authoritative statute than exists today ... The Russians for their part would get a good deal too. They would get, as we would get, the relief that comes from straightening out a dangerous muddle. They would get a provisional but durable acceptance of the fact that there are two Germanys ...

"In negotiating a new statute, we should begin by establishing the principles under which we have a right to be present in West Berlin and to participate in determining its future. For some extraordinary reason we have chosen to argue that our rights in Berlin rest upon the right of conquest. That is, if I may say so, a poor reason for the defenders of civilisation to invoke. If we choose to stand on the right of conquest, we shall live to regret it. It will boomerang. For where would we be if the Soviet Union, which is also a conqueror of Germany, chose to invoke for itself the right of conquest? The whole of Germany was surrendered to the conquerors, and if there is a right of conquest, it is not limited to West Berlin."

WAGES UP FOR 2 MILLION

Big wage increases for about one million lower-paid workers in Democratic Germany were announced during April. The latest increases mean that about two million people — approximately one-quarter of the total labour force — have had their wages raised since the beginning of 1959.

The latest groups to benefit included workers in light industry, shop assistants, and construction workers. Early wage hikes this year went to miners, teachers and health and post-office workers.

The pay increases average about ten percent, and they all mean an increase in real earnings, since prices in the German Democratic Republic are going down, and not up.

"GO EAST YOUNG MAN"

The movement of Germans from West to East, unpublicised in western newspapers, has been increasing at a steady rate during the last months. In the first three months of 1959 an average of about 6000 people a month left West Germany for the German Democratic Republic. This number is not as large as the number moving from East to West, but it is steadily increasing, whereas movement in the other direction is decreasing.

The reasons given for this increase are varied; thousands of the West-East emigrants are young men who do not wish to serve under Hitler's generals in the West German Wehrmacht. A large number of industrial workers are finding difficulty getting a job, especially miners from the Ruhr area and textile workers. Doctors, veterinarians and other professionals also are experiencing economic difficulties in many cases and seek the economic security to be found in Democratic Germany. Another large group is made up of people who left for West Germany months or years ago and never found the opportunities they had expected.

Reception centres in East Berlin and at various border points are constantly being expanded in order to lodge the immigrants for the average two-week waiting period before they are found a job and living quarters.

WHAT A NERVE!

By the Editor

On this page we report some of the passages of the latest "My patience is exhausted" speech to be made by a German ruler. His two predecessors who took this line were Kaiser Bill and Adolf Hitler.

When British newspapers (rather too little and too late) record the fact that West Germany is being run today largely by the old nazi gang of generals, industrialists, politicos and judges, Adenauer has the nerve to regard this as the mole-like activity of sinister wire-pullers.

But the last sentence which we reproduce from his speech deserves special notice. He said: "On the German side everything will be avoided which might in any way contribute to supplying fuel to the anti-German feeling in Britain."

What Adenauer really means by this sentence, of course, is that particularly crass cases of neo-nazism and anti-Semitism in West Germany should be hushed up so that the world does not hear about them.

But just on the remote off-chance that Chancellor Adenauer really meant this sentence seriously, we are glad to present him, free, gratis and for nothing, a few suggestions on how he could win friends and influence people in Britain. Here, Dr Adenauer, are some of the things you should do:

1. Sack all the generals of your rebuilt Wehrmacht: every single one of them served as an officer of field rank in Hitler's war of aggression.

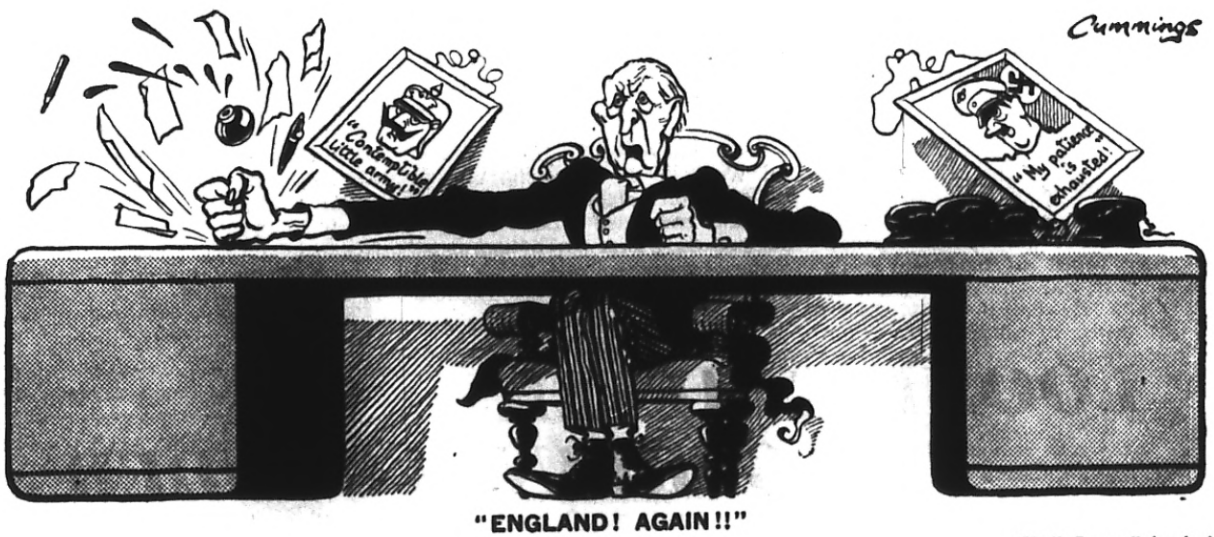
2. Purge the active nazis in your cabinet: for instance Refugee Minister Theodor Oberlaender, former storm troop major; Interior Minister Gerhard Schroeder, former storm trooper; Treasury Minister Hermann Lindrath, Nazi Party Member No. 3,997,157.

3. Sack the 800 judges and public prosecutors in the West German courts who passed death sentences on anti-fascists during the Hitler period.

4. Sack your personal assistant Hans Globke, author of the official nazi commentary to the Nuremberg Laws, the anti-Semitic legislation which led directly to the slaughter of six million Jews.

5. Clean up the West German school books, so that the innocent children of West Germany are not taught every day that Hitler was a great man who did much for Germany, though he may have made some mistakes.

We have plenty more suggestions, but those will do to go on with. After Dr Adenauer has carried out even that limited programme he might find the British press and the British public a little more friendly.



"ENGLAND! AGAIN!!"

("Daily Express", London)

On April 7th, West German Chancellor Adenauer announced that he would run for the post of West German President in July, thus automatically relinquishing the Chancellorship which he has held since the foundation of the West German state in September 1949.

Chancellor Adenauer's decision, which was said to have been the result of considerable pressure inside his own party, the Christian Democratic Union, was generally greeted in both West and East Germany as a step which could lead to increasing flexibility, and thus make easier progress towards a solution of the German problem.

In a speech transmitted by West German TV on April 8th, Chancellor Adenauer, who is 83, explained his decision, but he devoted a large part of his speech to attacks upon Britain.

Here are the relevant passages of his speech:

"I have sometimes asked myself if there are wire-pullers somewhere who deliberately try, for reasons of foreign policy, to impair relations between the British people and the German people. Unfortunately, for some considerable time ... the atmosphere in Britain towards Germany has been, one might almost say, systematically impaired.

"When Prime Minister Macmillan visited me in Bonn on March 12th I drew his attention openly and frankly to the systematically contrived impairment of the mood of Great Britain against Germany, and offered proof.

"I told him how much I regretted this development and how inexplicable I found it all, even from the British point of view ...

"I lay the greatest value on the memory of the war years being finally buried and the stopping of the aversion to Germany which is fed from various sources ... **On the German side everything will be avoided which might in any way contribute to supplying fuel to the anti-German feeling in Britain.**"

"HITLER-CAPONE PLAY WOWS EAST BERLINERS" — Says Chi Paper

The "Chicago Daily News" gave a big hand on April 2nd to a new theatrical production in East Berlin. Here is the full text of the report from correspondent David Binder:

"A play in which the leading character is a composite of Al Capone and Adolf Hitler is giving Germans in Communist East Berlin a chance to chuckle and shudder at their ex-Fuehrer. Even Cicero and the St. Valentine's Day massacre got into the act. They are given a Nazi flavor.

"The drama, written in 1941 by the late Bertolt Brecht, is called "The Arrestable Ascent of Arturo Ui." It is the story of a big-town gangster who shoves his way to power with the help of business tycoons and two-faced politicians. At the same time it is the parable of Hitler's rise to power.

"The setting is Chicago and neighboring Cicero during the 1930s, but it could as well be Berlin. Brecht managed to combine the characters of Hitler and Capone to make his villain. Moreover, this travesty contains countless parallels between the careers of the Chicago gang leader and the Nazi party boss.

"For instance, the St. Valentine's Day massacre in which Capone's mobsters wiped out their main rivals is blended with the Nazi "night of long knives" when Hitler butchered his storm trooper competitors.

"Brecht clothed his wrathful allegory with only the thinnest of literary veils — so that all the characters and events are readily recognizable: Goebbels and Goering; the Reichstag fire, and the seizure of Austria.

"The scenes change swiftly, showing Arturo (Capone-Hitler) Ui now as a terrifying killer, now as a ridiculous coward.

"The high point of this Berliner Ensemble production is the performance of Ekkehard Schall in the title role. Still in his 20s, Schall has mastered the odd gestures and demagogic voice of Hitler with incredible accuracy. The effect on the audience is one of peculiar tension. One minute Schall tickles them with his antics, and the next he horrifies them.

"That is just what Brecht wanted to do, says his commentary on Arturo Ui. 'The greatest political criminals must definitely be subjected to ridicule', he wrote."

Handel feted in Halle

The 200th anniversary of the death of the great German-British composer George Frederick Handel was marked by a large number of special ceremonies and concerts throughout the German Democratic Republic on April 14th. One of the highpoints was the first performance in Germany since 1926 of the composer's opera "Ariodonte" in the Berlin Opera House.

Also featured was a Handel Festival Week in the industrial city of Halle, the birthplace of the composer, who later emigrated to London, where he composed a large part of his operas, oratorios and other works. The Festival was officially opened with a speech by Prime Minister Otto Grotewohl and a performance of the oratorio "Belshazzar" and included a conference of musicologists from 17 countries who debated problems of Handel interpretation today.

The Festival, which is on an especially grand scale this year because of the anniversary, has become a yearly tradition in Halle since 1952, when German Handel experts decided to popularise the composer's music among wider circles of the public by means of the festivals and frequent concert tours to cultural centres in the factories and villages of the republic.

LOOKING AFTER ALGERIAN WOUNDED

Helping a wounded soldier from the plane at East Berlin airport

The first group of wounded Algerian soldiers arrived in Democratic Germany on January 22nd. Three were sent to a sanatorium for lung patients in Berka. The other ten, all foot and leg amputees, are being treated in the Elle Hospital in the Thuringian town of Eisenberg. A total of 400 hospital beds have been made available for wounded Algerian soldiers.

The patients, who were invited to Democratic Germany by the Free German Trade Union Federation, have been given a great welcome. For the ten in Eisenberg, the door of their ward scarcely stops swinging all day, and they are surrounded with flowers.

The faces of the nurses reflected the conflict between their sense of hospital discipline and care for the patients and understanding for the large number of visitors who soon upset all rules about visiting hours. The rules were soon tacitly changed and a more flexible schedule substituted.

It was not just the fact that the patients were foreigners, for the Elle Hospital has helped people from many countries with artificial limbs since 1951. It was rather the wish to see and speak with young men who fought with such self-sacrifice and perseverance for their independence and to tell them personally that they are friends.

Of course, the Algerian fighters knew this already when they arrived.

Although they may not have known how large the German Democratic Republic is or what factories or products are to be found here, they did know that almost every field-dressing kit carried by Algerian soldiers came from Democratic Germany, and that the people of the German Democratic Republic had contributed 800,000 marks for the Algerian independence struggle in 1958.

For the present, aside from the many visitors, they are of course not seeing much more than the Elle Hospital. Here they are under the care of a young but experienced woman doctor who has prescribed the normal procedure of massages and baths, of plaster impressions of the leg stump, and then careful fitting of the limb and walking exercises.

The youngest Algerian is nineteen. He joined the Algerian Liberation Army when he was sixteen, after his mother was stabbed to death by the colonial troops and one of his two sisters had died in prison. His friend Mohammed lost two brothers, a sister, and his father who was executed in Paris.

The 25-year-old lieutenant Achmad Yabka described his life and experiences. Already as a child he had hated the colonialists, and used to throw stones at them. As a young man, he had learned to use a rifle captured from the French. He described a battle for a French army camp in the Aures Mountains, fought with the memory of his murdered parents and the knowledge that the food supplies stored there were desperately needed by the Algerian units hidden nearby. The battle was won and the stores of food and ammunition became another part of the supplies involuntarily "donated" to the FNL.

Treatment is sometimes more frightening than bullets

Achmad also spoke of an aged woman who lived in one of the poverty-stricken villages of the Aures Mountains and who had washed, sewn and cooked for the soldiers of the liberation army and had also given them important information. Finally the French troops appeared at her door and demanded to know where and when the Algerian fighters came together. The old woman denied knowing anything and was silent. Her two children were first threatened — and then shot. She sobbed but remained silent until finally she also was killed — stabbed to death.

As the young lieutenant spoke, without pathos, it was difficult to realise that this brave and thoughtful young man with his sad, intelligent eyes could be an illiterate. But as he came from a poor miners' family, the priest who had been his teacher when he was seven had taught him only a few religious sayings and the letters of his name. Only 15 per cent of the non-European children in Algeria go to school. Books and a chance to learn might have enabled him to become a first-class engineer or a skilled worker.

Now the ten Algerians are trying to learn German — already they are printing their first words on the blackboard.

Apart from the expert medical treatment and the lessons in reading and writing, the Algerian patients are receiving something to which they are completely unaccustomed; comfort. Starting with comfortable beds and soft pillows, this includes good and sufficient meals as well as the leisure and opportunity to care for themselves and dress up a little like other young people. Hair-cream, for example, after years of rough fighting in the canyons and valleys of the Aures Mountains, seemed an indescribable luxury. The nurses say: "Our Algerians are the best-groomed and best-scented men in the whole hospital."

Despite their terrible experiences, the young veterans have retained their youthful good spirits to an amazing degree. They are also grateful for every hour of happiness and recuperation in Democratic Germany. At the same time, they are eager to return to Algeria, to their fellows in the Aures Mountains. "We are needed at home", Lieutenant Achmad Yabka explained.

Based on an article by Sigrid Smolka in "Wochenpost", Berlin, March 21st, 1959

Win a New Reader

Fill in the name and address of a friend, work-mate or acquaintance on the form below, and send it to

Democratic German Report
Friedrichstrasse 167/III
Berlin W 8, Germany

We shall be pleased to mail sample copies of the paper to him or her.

Name .....

Address .....

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

On another page of this issue we reproduce an interesting news story from the "Chicago Daily News" on the East Berlin premiere of a play by the late great Bertolt Brecht.

I have a feeling that this story makes history in a small way, because instead of being hidden away on page 254 among the small ads, as you might expect, the editor of the "Chicago Daily News" played it right across the top of the front page with a banner headline as main news of the day. I stand open to correction, but I cannot recall similar prominence ever being given in a daily newspaper anywhere to the straight report of a theatrical premiere. And this was a premiere about 5000 miles away from the place where the paper was printed.

Of course news from the theatre often makes the front pages: Abe Lincoln's assassination, the outbursts of La Callas and the various marital troubles of stars are examples which spring to mind. But this story is simply a straight report. Is this a record?

And I have a feeling that it makes history in another small way: it is the first news story from the German Democratic Republic which I can recall seeing in the American millionaire press without a single snide remark about East Germany in it. This is certainly a record. If I were not afraid of getting him in wrong with John Foster Dulles, Allan Dulles, Edgar Hoover and all the rest I would extend my congratulations to David Binder, the correspondent responsible.

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I have always been mildly fascinated by off-beat newspapers put out by small minorities fighting for lost causes like flat-earthism, bi-metallism, and the numerical significance of the pyramids, so I am very grateful to the American reader who has just sent me a copy of "Thy Kingdom Come", the official organ of the "Amalgamated Flying Saucer Clubs of America, Inc."

This other-worldly organ proclaims as its lofty purpose "To help create greater understanding and cooperation between the people of earth and the people of space" which seems a good idea.

What particularly struck me about it, however, was the announcement of the first national convention of the organisation to be held in Los Angeles in July this year. "Located at the hub of the freeways near the heart of Los Angeles, with direct bus service from airports, our convention hotel makes attendance easy and convenient for persons arriving either by auto or by means of public transportation" the paper states.

And what about delegates arriving by flying saucer?

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An alent reader has drawn our attention to the fact that on the front page of the March 13th issue we managed to spell Mr Khrushchov's name in three different ways in eleven lines. (To save you looking it up, the variants were Krushschov and Krushchov.) I can only hang my head in shame, and feel glad I am not still working on the "Bromley and West Kent Mercury", the local paper on which I learned the trade: a mistake like this would probably have got me the sack.

*

In GERMAN REPORT dated March 27th we reported that Christian Democratic town councillors in the West German town of Luebeck had turned down a proposal to name a school after Thomas Mann, great German writer, on the grounds that during the war "Thomas Mann sullied his own nest" by opposing the nazis.

Now the news has come through that somebody has managed to convince the city worthies that they were making fools of themselves, and they have agreed to give the school, a new grammar school, the name of the internationally renowned Nobel Prize winner. I am glad to be able to report that during the heated discussions which led up to this decision, the girls attending the grammar school came up with a bright and very unstuffy suggestion: they wanted their school to be named after Felix Krull, the amoral confidence trickster and latter-day Casanova who was the hero of one of Thomas Mann's novels.

*

When my wife gave birth to a daughter in July 1956 I smuggled a reference to the fact into the Berlin Notebook as an excuse for "any misprints or other imperfections in this issue of the paper".

This time I shall scorn such devious methods: one of the minor privileges of being an editor is that one can put personal news into the paper, and thus get out of the necessity of writing dozens of personal letters to friends and relations.

I am therefore glad to announce that on April 12th my wife Georgia gave birth here in East Berlin to a fine bouncing 8½ pound son, David. Mother and child (and father) are all doing well, thanks to the excellent care provided by the all-inclusive health service here.

*

Seven Seas Publishers, in East Berlin, publish books in the English language for the many students and other readers of English in Democratic Germany, but also for readers in almost all countries of the world who are interested in good books at low prices. Their specialties up till now have been American authors having difficulty getting published because of their progressive points of view as well as other English language writers who are not so well-known outside their own countries as their writings deserve. Examples are the American novels "A Season of Fear" by Abraham Polonsky, "Some Love, Some Hunger" by Millen Brand and "The Ecstacy of Owen Muir" by Ring Lardner, Jr. and the two Australian novels "The Mirage" on the "half-caste" problem in Australia (by F. B. Vickers) and Dymphna Cusack's "Say No to Death", a love tragedy.

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